

How Lamar County came to regulating Storm Water In the late 1960's the US Federal Government through losses in in the Supreme Courts was found responsible for not ensuring that the federal government was providing a sufficient means of regulation to safe guard our natural stream and waterway systems throughout the country. Do to the losses in the Court system it was ordered by the courts that the federal government through the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) to develop a policy and regulations to correlate which provide for the safe guard of our natural stream and waterway systems.

After years of research and study it was determined that growth was the primary cause of the impurities in the waterways and that led to the [Clean Water Act of 1972](#) being passed by Congress. The [Clean Water Act](#) however provided the policy and left it up to the [US EPA](#) to develop a means of regulating that Policy.

The [US EPA](#) developed regulations and set up a means of implementing which requires States and local jurisdictions with population centers of a certain size to implement these regulations. This led to the [State of Mississippi](#) having its state regulations and permits for Storm Water, and the development of local County and City Storm Water permits and standards. Lamar County is part of the greater Hattiesburg population statistical area and therefor is required to have the Storm Water regulations.

What is Storm Water

The Federal Government defines Storm Water as "...runoff, snow melt runoff, and surface runoff and drainage [40 CFR 122.26(b)(13)]". Although simple this definition spans a great area of topic. It basically is stating that everything water flow wise whether from rain, snow melt, to surface drainage is included in Storm Water.

How does Storm Water Effect You

As a citizen or a worker within Lamar County Storm Water can effect you in multiple different ways. If there is enough erosion from construction sites, developments, or yard work being done, it may clog a creek behind your house, business, or job site causing your property or project to flood. Over time that material may build up in the bottom of some of the creeks we have in Lamar County causing the creeks to hold less water because they are not as deep as previously thought they were. When it rains there is now more water that creek area and depth causing it to flood, possibly in places that have never seen flooding in over 30 years or more, or even on record. The impact on wildlife can be unimaginable in the sense that fish have shallower creeks to live in which tend to stay warmer from the sun because they are not as deep to dissipate the heat. The flow of the creeks could be different when it rains then it is not raining.

More directly to your house, or business, if you blow your leaves and grass clipping into the street or ditch you could cause a blockage of one of the culverts, or drains causing water to flood and start flowing some other direction possibly to your house or business. What is the County's Responsibility

Lamar County is limited in what it can do to help the Storm Water situation. Lamar County monitors all of our roadways and the crossing that we have under our control to ensure that the ditches and creeks are open and free flowing. Lamar County however does not have the right to go on private property without going through a process of noticing mandated by the state in order to do work related to creeks and streams. It also requires that it be a health and welfare need in order to conduct the operation.

Homeowner's Responsibility The homeowner in Lamar County unlike in municipal's are responsible for the majority of storm water protection and practices within Mississippi. Since Lamar County can only deal with issues primarily related to our right of way, we rely on homeowners to ensure drainage is free of obstruction, and that any filling or construction work being done is within compliance with state and local statutes and ordinances. It is against Mississippi law to block or obstruct a natural water course which would result in adverse effects being created. In most cases it is up to the owner of the parcel being adversely effected to present a case in front of Chancery court.

Lamar County Storm Water Manager is

Brian Neuman

serves as the Development Official

Desk Phone (601)794-3423

Mobile Phone (601)408-8043

Located 144 Shelby Speights Drive

Purvis, MS 39475

(old Bank Building next to City Hall) For more information:

Call the Planning Department(601) 794-1024 during normal business hours. (8 A.M. - 5 P.M. Monday - Friday)